CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1. A bearing component masking unit comprising:
 - a housing having an inner surface;
 - a first fixture attached to a first end of the housing;
 - a seal positioned within the first end of the housing and sized to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing;
 - a plurality of seals adapted to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing and adapted to cover sidewall surfaces of respective additional bearing components when positioned within the housing;
 - a second fixture positioned within a second end of the housing;
 - a seal positioned within the second end of the housing and sized to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing; and
 - a means for drawing the first fixture toward the second fixture.
- 2. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, first fixture is moveably positioned within the housing.
- 3. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, wherein the means for drawing the first fixture toward the second fixture includes a threaded rod and a nut.
- 4. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, wherein the plurality of seals are adapted to cover the sidewall surfaces of bearing components during a coating process.

- 5. The bearing component masking unit of claim 4, wherein the bearing components are sleeve bearing components.
- 6. The bearing component masking unit of claim 4, wherein the plurality of seals are adapted to seal the outer surfaces of the bearing components during a coating process.
- 7. The bearing component masking unit of claim 6, wherein the bearing components are sleeve bearing components.
- 8. The bearing component masking unit of claim1 further including a lift.
- 9. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, wherein the plurality of seals are comprised of nitrile.
- 10. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, wherein the plurality of seals are annular.
- 11. The bearing component masking unit of claim 1, wherein the plurality of seals have an inner diameter that is less than an inner diameter of the respective bearing components.
- 12. The bearing component masking unit of claim 10, wherein the respective bearing components are sleeve bearings.
- 13. A bearing component masking unit comprising:
 - a housing having an inner surface and having a bottom end;
 - a bearing component positioned within the housing above the bottom end of the housing;
 - a first seal positioned within the housing between the bottom end of the housing and the bearing component, the first seal sized to provide a seal

against the inner surface of the housing and to cover a first sidewall surface of the bearing component;

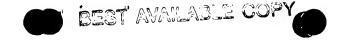
a top end of the housing positioned opposite the bottom end;
a second seal positioned within the housing between the bearing
component and the top end of the housing, the second seal sized to provide a
seal against the inner surface of the housing and to cover a second sidewall
surface of the bearing component.

- 14. The bearing component masking unit of claim 13, wherein the bearing component is a sleeve bearing.
- 15. The bearing component masking unit of claim 13, further including an additional bearing component positioned within the housing above the bearing component; and

a third seal positioned between the additional bearing component at the top end of the housing, the third seal sized to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing and to cover a sidewall surface of the additional bearing component.

16. The bearing component masking unit of claim 13, further including one or more additional bearing components positioned within the housing; and one or more additional seals positioned between adjacent sidewalls of the additional bearing components, the one or more additional seals sized to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing.

- 17. The bearing component masking unit of claim 16, wherein the one or more additional bearing components are sleeve bearings.
- 18. The bearing component masking unit of claim 15, further including a force generator to draw the bottom end of the housing and the top end of the housing toward each other to help the sealing effect of the seals.
- 19. The bearing component masking unit of claim 15, wherein the plurality of additional seals cover the sidewall surfaces of the bearing components during a coating process.
- 20. The bearing component masking unit of claim 19, wherein the bearing components are sleeve bearing components.
- 21. The bearing component masking unit of claim19, wherein the plurality of seals are adapted to seal the outer surfaces of the bearing components during a coating process.
- 22. The bearing component masking unit of claim 19, wherein the bearing components are sleeve bearing components.
- 23. The bearing component masking unit of claim 13, further including a means for pushing the first end of the housing towards the second end.
- 24. The bearing component masking unit of claim 16 further including a means for pushing the first end of the housing towards the second end.
- 25. The bearing component masking unit of claim 13, wherein the seals are comprised of nitrile.
- 26. The bearing component masking unit of claim 16, wherein the plurality of seals are annular.



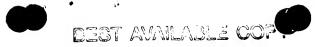
- 27. The bearing component masking unit of claim 16, wherein the plurality of seals have an inner diameter that is less than an inner diameter of the respective bearing components.
- 28. The bearing component masking unit of claim 10, wherein the respective bearing components are sleeve bearings.
- 29. A method of coating selected portions of a bearing component, comprising the steps of:

positioning a first bearing component within a housing, the housing having a bottom end and having a first seal between the bottom end of the housing and the bearing component; the first seal sized to provide a seal against an inner surface of the housing and covering a first sidewall of the first bearing component;

positioning a second seal above a second sidewall of the bearing component, the second seal sized to provide a seal against an inner surface of the housing and covering the second sidewall of the first bearing component;

compressing the seals such that the first and second sidewalls and an outer surface of the bearing component are sealed from an inner portion of the housing;

applying a coating to an inner surface of the bearing component.



30. The method of claim 29, further comprising the steps, prior to the compressing step, of:

positioning one or more additional bearing components having sidewalls within the housing;

positioning one or more additional seals between the sidewalls of the one or more additional bearing components, the one or more additional seals sized to provide a seal against the inner surface of the housing.

31. A-method-of-coating-selected-portions-of-a-bearing-component, comprising the steps of:

positioning a first bearing component within a housing, the housing having a bottom end and having a first seal between the bottom end of the housing and the bearing component; the first seal sized to provide a seal against a first sidewall of the first bearing component; positioning a second seal above a second sidewall of the bearing component, the second seal sized to provide a seal against the second sidewall of the first bearing component; compressing the seals such that a seal is provided between the first and second sidewalls of the bearing component; applying a coating to an inner surface and an outer surface of the bearing

applying a coating to an inner surface and an outer surface of the bearing component.